

December 21, 2010

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia: Madam Speaker, the primary purpose of this bill is to provide, for the first time, specific programs to assist children who are victims of the brutal and devastating scourge of domestic child sex trafficking in this country.

S. 2925 authorizes grants to appropriate victims services entities to create comprehensive victim-centered approaches to address the sex trafficking of minors. In particular, this legislation allows funds under the Byrne and JAG Grant Programs to be used to provide education, training, deterrence, and prevention programs related to sex trafficking of minors. It also provides funding to implement the improvements in the National Crime Information Center. In addition, this legislation strengthens laws aimed at apprehending and punishing domestic traffickers, while also improving the ability of law enforcement and other entities to find, rescue, and assist child victims.

Importantly, S. 2925 also encourages States to treat minor victims of sex trafficking as crime victims rather than as criminal defendants or juvenile delinquents. We have made steady progress in recent years in addressing international sex trafficking of minors, as well as adults, under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, which passed Congress in 2000 on a strong bipartisan basis. It was most recently reauthorized by the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008, which I was pleased to help develop and shepherd through the House.

We have worked for some time through legislation and other efforts, such as the Congressional Caucus on Sex Trafficking, which I cochair with the gentleman from New York (Mrs. *Maloney*), the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr.

Smith

), and the gentleman from Texas (Ms.

Granger

), to bring more attention to the need to better address the issue of domestic sex trafficking, particularly trafficking of minors. Unfortunately, we have encountered barriers to having it recognized that these children are victims in the domestic sex trade and not criminals.

Now, under the leadership of the Senator from Oregon, Senator *Wyden*, and House Members

of the Congressional Caucus on Sex Trafficking, this is finally changing. We finally have legislation before us that not only recognizes that children caught up in domestic sex trafficking are victims, but also addresses the unique needs of these child victims in being rescued and helping them pursuing a productive life.

We are amending the Senate bill to remove certain nonessential elements of the bill, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill.